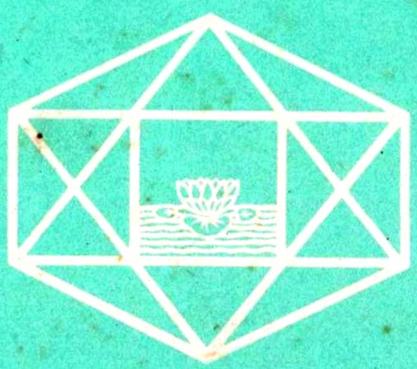
MARCH 1977

ALL INDIA MAGAZINE



SRI AUROBINDO SOCIETY
PONDICHERRY

AIM All India Magazine
VOL. VI NO. 8 MARCH 1977

—Matter shall reveal the Spirit's face.

February 21, 1978 is our Mother's Birth Centenary Day. How shall we prepare ourselves 'to be worthy' of Her Centenary? Self-surrender to the divine Mother is our only effective means: "surrender of oneself and all one is and has and every plane of the consciousness and every movement to the Divine." May 'Remember and Offer' be our mantra. AIM presents during this year, in every issue, something special befitting this theme.

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The Mother's Answers

What is the best way of making humanity progress?

To progress oneself.

(*a*) *What is true freedom and* (*b*) *how to attain it?*

a) Freedom from the ego.

b) Get rid of the ego.

What is the right way of achieving lasting world unity?

To Realise the Consciousness of the ONE.

What is the secret of success in sadhana?

Surrender.

THE MOTHER

(*Sri Aurobindo Circle*, 31st Number)

Offering and Surrender

They are two aspects of the same thing, but not altogether the same. One is more active than the other. They do not belong to quite the same plane of existence.

For example, you have decided to offer your life to the Divine, you take that decision. But all of a sudden, something altogether unpleasant, unexpected happens to you and your first movement is to react and protest. Yet you have made the offering, you have said once for all: "My life belongs to the Divine", and then suddenly an extremely unpleasant incident happens (that can happen) and there is something in you that reacts, that does not want it. But here, if you want to be truly logical with your offering, you must bring forward this unpleasant incident, make an offering of it to the Divine, telling him very sincerely: "Let Your will be done; if You have decided it that way, it will be that way." And this must be a willing and spontaneous adhesion. So it is very difficult.

Even for the smallest thing, something that is not in keeping with what you expected, what you have worked for, instead of an opposite reaction coming in — spontaneously, irresistibly, you draw back: "No, not

that" — if you have made a complete surrender, a total surrender, well, it does not happen like that: you are as quiet, as peaceful, as calm in one case as in the other. And perhaps you had the notion that it would be better if it happened in a certain way, but if it happens differently, you find that this also is all right. You might have, for example, worked very hard to do a certain thing, so that something might happen, you might have given much time, much of your energy, much of your will, and all that not for your own sake, but, say, for the divine work (that is the offering); now suppose that after having taken all this trouble, done all this work, made all these efforts, it all goes just the other way round, it does not succeed. If you are truly surrendered, you say: "It is good, it is all good, it is all right; I did what I could, as well as I could, now it is not my decision, it is the decision of the Divine, I accept entirely what He decides." On the other hand, if you do not have this deep and spontaneous surrender, you tell yourself: "How is it? I took so much trouble to do a thing which is not for a selfish purpose, which is for the Divine Work, and this is the result, it is not successful!" Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, it is like that.

True surrender is a very difficult thing.

20. 5. 1953 THE MOTHER

(*Questions and Answers — 1953*, pp. 53-54)

(To be continued)

A Sacred Duty

...There is this habit (hardly conscious, I hope) of absorbing as much Energy, as much Consciousness as one can and using it for one's personal satisfactions. That indeed is something which is happening every minute. If all the Energy, all the Consciousness which is constantly poured out upon you all, were used for the true purpose, that is, for the divine work and the preparation of the divine work, we should be already very far on the road, much farther than we are. But everybody, more or less consciously, and in any case instinctively, absorbs as much Consciousness and Energy as he can and as soon as he feels this Energy in himself, he uses it for his personal ends, his own satisfaction.

Who thinks that all this Force that is there, that is infinitely greater, infinitely more precious than all money-forces, this Force which is there and is given consciously, constantly, with an endless perseverance and patience, only for *one sole purpose*, that of realising the divine work — who thinks of not wasting it? Who realises that it is a sacred duty to make progress, to prepare oneself to understand better and live better? For one lives *by* the divine Energy, one lives *by* the divine Consciousness, and uses them for one's personal, selfish ends.

You are shocked when a few thousand rupees are wasted but not shocked when there are... when streams of Consciousness and Energy are diverted from their true purpose!

If one wants to do a divine work upon earth, one must come with tons of patience and endurance. One must know how to live in eternity and wait for the consciousness to awaken in everyone — the consciousness of what *true* integrity is.

2. 6. 1954 THE MOTHER

(*Bulletin*, Nov. 1975, pp. 87-89)

All would change if man could once consent to be spiritualised; but his nature, mental and vital and physical, is rebellious to the higher law. He loves his imperfection.

Sri Aurobindo

Why One Seeks the Divine

Let us first put aside the quite foreign consideration of what we would do if the union with the Divine brought eternal joylessness, Nirananda or torture. Such a thing does not exist and to drag it in only clouds the issue. The Divine is Anandamaya and one can seek him for the Ananda he gives; but he has also in him many other things and one may seek him for any of them, for peace, for liberation, for knowledge, for power, for anything else of which one may feel the pull or the impulse. It is quite possible for someone to say: "Let me have Power from the Divine and do His work or His Will and I am satisfied, even if the use of Power entails suffering also." It is possible to shun bliss as a thing too tremendous or ecstatic and ask only or rather for peace, for liberation, for Nirvana. You speak of self-fulfilment, — one may regard the Supreme not as the Divine but as one's highest Self and seek fulfilment of one's being in that highest Self; but one need not envisage it as

a self of bliss, ecstasy, Ananda — one may envisage it as a self of freedom, vastness, knowledge, tranquillity, strength, calm, perfection — perhaps too calm for a ripple of anything so disturbing as joy to enter. So even if it is for something to be gained that one approaches the Divine, it is not a fact that one can approach Him or seek union only for the sake of Ananda and nothing else.

That involves something which throws all your reasoning out of gear. For these are aspects of the Divine Nature, powers of it, states of his being, — but the Divine Himself is something absolute, someone self-existent, not limited by his aspects, — wonderful and ineffable, not existing by them, but they existing because of Him. It follows that if he attracts by his aspects, all the more he can attract by his very absolute selfness which is sweeter, mightier, profounder than any aspect. His peace, rapture, light, freedom, beauty are marvellous and ineffable, because he is himself magically, mysteriously, transcendently marvellous and ineffable. He can then be sought after for his wonderful and ineffable self and not only for the sake of one aspect or another of his. The only thing needed for that is, first, to arrive at a point when the psychic being feels this pull of the Divine in himself and, secondly, to arrive at the point when the mind, vital and each thing else begins to feel to that that was what it was wanting and the surface hunt after Ananda or what else was only an excuse for drawing the nature towards that supreme magnet.

Your argument that because we know the union with the Divine will bring Ananda, therefore it must be for the Ananda that we seek the union, is not true and has no force. One who loves a queen may know that if she returns his love it will bring him power, position, riches and yet it need not be for the power, position, riches that he seeks her love. He may love her for herself and could love her equally if she were not a queen; he might have no hope of any return whatever and yet love her, adore her, live for her, die for her simply because she is she. That has happened and men have loved women without any hope of enjoyment of result, loved steadily, passionately after age has come and beauty has gone. Patriots do not love their country only when she is rich, powerful, great and has much to give them; love for country has been most ardent, passionate, absolute when the country was poor, degraded, miserable, having nothing to give but loss, wounds, torture, imprisonment, death as the wages of her service; yet even knowing that they would never see her free, men have lived, served and died for her — for her own sake, not for what she could give. Men have loved Truth for her own sake and for what they could seek or find of her, accepted poverty, persecution, death itself; they have been content even to seek

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A motive, but a motive of the soul, not of vital desire; a reason not of the mind, but of the self and spirit. An asking too, but the asking that is the soul's inherent aspiration, not a vital longing.

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for her always, not finding, and yet never given up the search. That means what? That man, country, Truth and other things besides can be loved for their own sake and not for anything else, not for any circumstance or attendant quality or resulting enjoyment, but for something absolute that is either in them or behind their appearance and circumstance. The Divine is more than a man or woman, a stretch of land or a creed, opinion, discovery or principle. He is the Person beyond all persons, the Home and Country of all souls, the Truth of which truths are only imperfect figures. And can He then not be loved and sought for his own sake, as and more than these have been by men even in their lesser selves and nature?

What your reasoning ignores is that which is absolute or tends towards the absolute in man and his seeking as well as in the Divine — something not to be explained by mental reasoning or vital motive. A motive, but a motive of the soul, not of vital desire; a reason not of the mind, but of the self and spirit. An asking too, but the asking that is the soul's inherent aspiration, not a vital longing. That is what comes up when there is the sheer self-giving, when "I seek you for this, I seek you for that" changes to a sheer "I seek you for you." It is that marvellous and ineffable absolute in the Divine that X means when he says, "Not knowledge nor this nor that, but Krishna." The pull of that is indeed a categorical imperative, the self in us drawn to the Divine because of the imperative call of the greater Self, the soul ineffably drawn to-

wards the object of its adoration because it cannot be otherwise, because it is it and He is He. That is all about it.

I have written all that only to explain what we mean when we speak of seeking the Divine for himself and not for anything else — so far as it is explicable. Explicable or not, it is one of the most dominant facts of spiritual experience. The will to self-giving is only an expression of this fact. But this does not mean that I object to your asking for Ananda. Ask for that by all means, so long as to ask for it is a need of any part of your being — for these are the things that lead towards the Divine so long as the absolute inner call that is there all the time does not push itself to the surface. But it was really that that has drawn from the beginning and is there behind — it is the categorical spiritual imperative, the absolute need of the soul for the Divine.

I am not saying that there is to be no Ananda. The self-giving itself is a profound Ananda and what it brings, carries in its wake an inexpressible Ananda — and it is brought by this method sooner than by any

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The pull of that is indeed a categorical imperative, the self in us drawn to the Divine because of the imperative call of the greater Self, the soul ineffably drawn towards the object of its adoration because it cannot be otherwise, because it is it and He is He.

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other, so that one can say almost, "A self-less self-giving is the best policy." Only one does not do it out of policy. Ananda is the result, but it is done not for the result, but for the self-giving itself and for the Divine himself — a subtle distinction, it may seem to the mind, but very real.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Letters on Yoga*, Cent. ed. vol. 23, pp. 512-15)

Whatever one wants sincerely and persistently from the Divine, the Divine is sure to give. If then you want Ananda and go on wanting, you will surely have it in the end. The only question is what is to be the chief power in your seeking, a vital demand or a psychic aspiration manifesting through the heart and communicating itself to the mental and vital and physical consciousness. The latter is the greatest power and makes the shortest way — and besides one has to come that way sooner or later.

Sri Aurobindo

Problems in Everyday Life

Q: While talking, there is a basis of peace and silence, but no conscious remembrance of Mother throughout. Only at the end is there any recollection. How to get the constant remembrance?

That is difficult. If you have the peace and silence undisturbed and the recollection, it is enough for a beginning.

Q: Usually it is the outer being that is talking. But it is rarely reasonable and it speaks a lot and of useless things. So I want my inner being to take the charge of speech.

Yes. The speech must come from within and be controlled from within.

In talking one has the tendency to come down into a lower and more external consciousness because talking comes from the external mind. But it is impossible to avoid it altogether. What you must do is to learn to get back at once to the inner consciousness — this so long as you are not able to speak always from the inner being or at least with the inner being supporting the action.

Q: How is one to know whether one's speech is coming from within and is supported and carried on by the inner being?

If one is aware of one's inner being at all, one knows. It is an automatic result of consciousness. Of course if one has no inner life or spiritual experience then the question does not arise since then everything, thought, feeling, speech is external.

*Q: I am still not able to control my speech. The ordinary forces make me talk on unnecessary subjects. This tires me and I get depressed.... If this defect continues, I am afraid, I shall have to observe mauna.**

Mauna is seldom of much use. After it is over, the speech starts again as in the old times. It is in speech itself that the speech must change.

Q: Do you allow me to retire for a week?

Certainly not. Neither retirement nor silence. In your present condition they would be most unhealthy for you.

Be simple and natural about things and don't erect everything into a mountain of difficulty.

SRI AUROBINDO

(*Guidance from Sri Aurobindo, Vol. II*, pp. 101-102)

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* Enforced silence

On Meditation

It is always better, for meditation — you see, we use the word "meditation", but it does not necessarily mean "moving ideas around in the head", quite the contrary — it is always better to try to concentrate in a centre, the centre of aspiration, one might say, the place where the flame of aspiration burns, to gather in all the energies there, at the solar plexus centre and, if possible, to obtain an attentive silence as though one wanted to listen to something extremely subtle, something that demands a complete attention, a complete concentration and total silence. And then not to move at all. Not to think, not to stir, and make that movement of opening so as to receive all that can be received, but taking good care not to try to know what is happening while it is happening, for if one wants to understand or even to observe actively, it keeps up a sort of cerebral activity which is unfavourable to the fullness of the receptivity — to be silent, as totally silent as possible, in an attentive concentration, and then be still.

If one succeeds in this, then, when everything is over, when one comes out of meditation, some time later — usually not immediately — from within the being something new emerges in the consciousness: a new understanding, a new appreciation of things, a new attitude in life — in short, a new way of being. This may

be fugitive, but at that moment, if one observes it, one finds that something has taken one step forward on the path of understanding or transformation. It may be an illumination, an understanding truer or closer to the truth, or a power of transformation which helps you to achieve a psychological progress or a widening of the consciousness or a greater control over your movements, over the activities of the being.

And these results are never immediate. For if one tries to have them at once, one remains in a state of activity which is quite the contrary of true receptivity. One must be as neutral, as immobile, as passive as one can be, with a background of silent aspiration not formulated in words or ideas or even in feelings; something that does this (*gesture like a mounting flame*) in an ardent vibration, but which does not formulate, and above all, does not try to understand.

With a little practice one reaches a state which may be obtained at will, in a few seconds, that is, one doesn't waste any of the meditation time. Naturally, in the beginning, one must slowly quieten the mind, gather up one's consciousness, concentrate; one loses three-quarters of the time in preparing oneself. But when one has practised the thing, in two or three seconds one can get it, and then one benefits from the whole period of receptivity.

Naturally, there are still more advanced and perfected states, but that comes later. But already if one reaches that state, one profits fully by the meditation.

5. 6. 1957 THE MOTHER

(Questions and Answers — 1957-58)

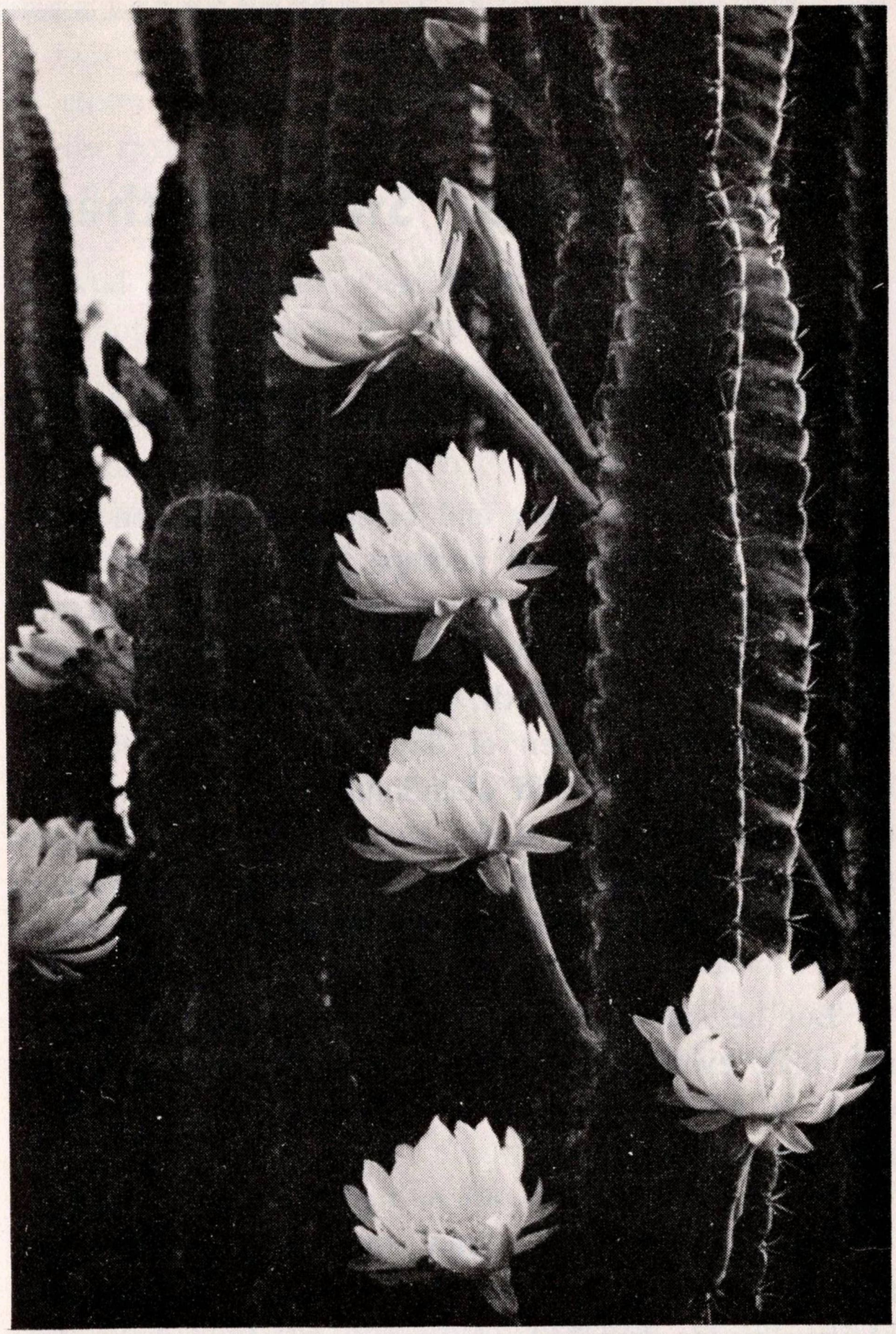
Painting by F. C. Hsu (An Ashram inmate)

Life has a Purpose

What would be the use of man if he were not created to throw a bridge between That which *is* eternally but is unmanifested and that which is manifested, between all the transcendences and splendours of the divine life and all the dark and sorrowful ignorance of the material world? Man is the link between what must be and what is; he is the footbridge thrown across the abyss, he is the large X laid crosswise, the quaternary point of union. His true domicile, the effective seat of his consciousness should be in the intermediary world at the meeting-point of the four arms of the cross, just where all the infinitude of the Unthinkable comes to take a precise form so that it may be projected into the countless manifestation....

That centre is a place of supreme love, of perfect consciousness, of pure and total knowledge. There establish, O Lord, those who can, who must and will truly serve Thee, so that Thy work may be accomplished, the bridge be definitively built and Thy forces poured out untiringly over the world.

(*Prayers and Meditations of the Mother*, 29. 8. 1914)



FORTUNE

Botanical name: Cereus hexagonus *Common name:* Hedge Cactus

Words of Our Sweet Mother

You who are weary and bruised and beaten down, you who fall, who think perhaps that you are defeated, listen to the voice of a friend, he knows your sorrows, he has shared them, he has suffered like yourselves from the ills of the earth; he has like you crossed deserts under the burden of day, he has known hunger and thirst, solitude and abandonment, and, most cruel of all, the destitution of the heart: alas ! he has known too hours of doubt, he has the experience of errors, failings, flinchings, all kinds of weakness.

But he says to you: Courage ! hearken to the lesson that, every morning, the rising Sun brings to the earth in its first rays. It is a lesson of hope, it is a message of consolation.

You who weep, you who suffer, you who tremble, not daring to foresee the term of your ills, the issue of your pangs, behold ! There is no night without daybreak, when darkness is thickest dawn is ready; there

is no fog that the Sun does not dissipate, no cloud that it does not gild, no tear that it does not one day dry, no storm after which its bow of triumph does not lift up its rays, no snow that it does not melt, no winter that it does not change into radiant spring.

And for you likewise, there is no affliction which does not bring forth its counterpoise of glory, no distress that cannot be transformed into joy, no defeat that does not turn into victory, no downfall that does not change into an ascension to greater heights, no solitude that does not become a very home of life, no discord that does not resolve into harmony; sometimes it is the misunderstanding between two minds which obliges two hearts to open themselves for communion; in short, there is no weakness so infinite that it cannot change into power. Even, it is in supreme weakness that it pleases the All-Powerful to reveal himself.

Listen, my little child, who feel yourself so broken, so fallen, who have nothing, nothing any more to cover your misery and nourish your pride, yet never before have you been so great! How close is he to the summits, who awakes in the depths! for the deeper the abyss the more the heights reveal themselves.

Know you not this, that the sublimest forces of cosmic extension seek, to clothe themselves, the most opaque veils of Matter? O splendid nuptials of sovereign love with the obscurest plasticities, of the desire of the darkness with the most royal light!

If ordeal and fault have flung you down, if you have sunk into an abysm of suffering, do not at all be grieved, for it is there that the divine affection, the supreme benediction will reach you ! Because you have passed through a crucible of purifying sorrows, for you are the glorious ascents.

You are in the wilderness: well, listen to the voices of the silence. The noise of eulogistic words and applause from outside has gladdened your ears, but the voices of the silence will gladden your soul, awakening in you the echo of the depths, the chant of the divine harmonies !

You are walking in deep night: well, gather there the priceless treasures of the darkness. Bright sunshine lights up the ways of the intelligence but in the night with its white luminosities are the hidden roads of perfection, the secret of spiritual riches.

You are following the path of denudation; it is the way to plenitude. When you have nothing left, all will be given to you. For those who are sincere and straight, out of the worst emerges always the best.

Listen, my little child, who feel yourself so broken, so fallen, who have nothing, nothing any more to cover your misery and nourish your pride, yet never before have you been so great! How close is he to the summits, who awakes in the depths!

Each grain that one puts in the earth produces a thousand. Each beat of the wing of sorrow can be a soar towards glory.

And when the adversary rages against man, all that he does to annihilate him serves only to make him greater.

Hearken to the story of the worlds! see, the great enemy seems to triumph. He throws into night the creatures of the light and the night is filled with stars. He wars with a growing rage against the working of the cosmos, he attacks the integrity of the empire of the primal sphere, shatters its harmony, divides it and subdivides it, scatters its dust to the four winds of infinity, and, behold, the dust turns into a golden sowing which fertilises the infinite and peoples it with worlds which will gravitate, henceforth, in a larger orbit of space around their eternal centre; so division itself produces a richer and profounder unity and, multiplying the surfaces of the material universe, aggrandises the empire which it set out to destroy.

Beautiful, doubtless, was the song of the primordial

In this matter despised but fertile, desolate but blessed, each atom contains a divine thought, each being carries in himself the Divine Inhabitant, and if nothing in all the universe is so frail as man, nothing likewise is so divine as he!

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sphere rocked on the bosom of immensity, but how much more beautiful and triumphal is the symphony of the constellations, the music of the spheres, the immense chorale filling the heavens with an eternal hymn of victory.

Hearken yet. No state was ever more precarious than that of man when he was separated on earth from his divine source. Above him spread the hostile frontier of the usurper, and at the gates of the horizon watched gaolers armed with flaming swords. Then, since he could climb no more to the source of life, the source sprang up within him; since he could no longer receive the light from on high, the light shone forth at the very centre of his being; since he could not commune with transcendent love, that love made a holocaust of itself, gave itself as an offering, choosing each terrestrial being, each human ego as its dwelling-place and its sanctuary.

That is how, in this matter despised but fertile, desolate but blessed, each atom contains a divine thought, each being carries in himself the Divine Inhabitant, and if nothing in all the universe is so frail as man, nothing likewise is so divine as he !

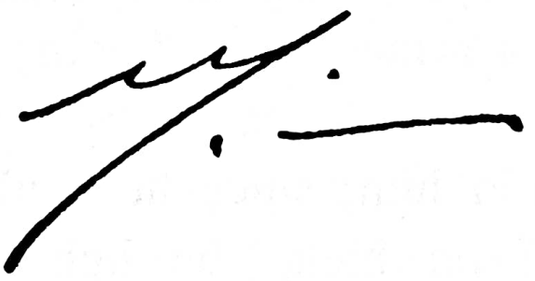
Verily, verily, in humiliation is found the cradle of glory.

THE MOTHER

(*The Supreme Discovery*, 1971 ed., pp. 10-16)

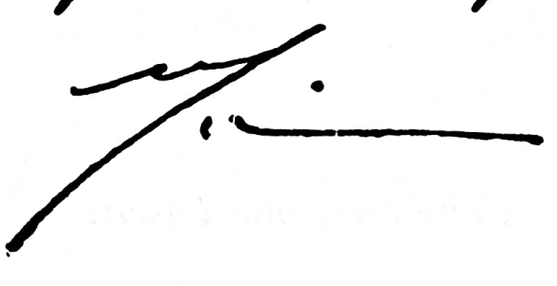
The truth is in us,
we have only to
become aware of it.

with my blessings



After all, it is very simple,
we have only to become
what we are in the
depths of our being.

with my blessings



"I am There"

Ever since Mother left her physical body, known and unknown persons have been asking for something touched by her. Once someone came and said, "Please give me something touched by the Mother; it will help me much in sadhana." I saw that he was sincere. I also remembered seeing him with Mother upstairs. Now, you know how devotees always wanted to place their head in Mother's lap but some lacked the courage to do it. To some of them I used to say, "Place your head in Mother's lap." This person was one of them. So I asked him about it. He was so happy to recall that occasion and said: "Champaklalji, I am very grateful to you for ever. You asked me to lay my head in Mother's lap. I would never have dared to do it myself. And how she caressed me!"

I said: Oh, then you are very fortunate. But you do not have anything touched by Mother?

HE: No, Champaklalji, that is why I am praying for it.

C: What about your head? Has it not been touched by Mother? You are always carrying it and it remains with you all the time. Nobody can take it away from you. Is it not?

HE: Yes, you have opened my eyes today. I now understand how the inner life is more important than the outer.

On a similar occasion, another person said to me:

Of course she has blessed me with both the hands. And more. First she placed her hand on her own heart and then she placed her full palm over my chest, gently pressed one finger and said: *There* I AM. See there inside.

Here also I had to draw his attention to the fact that Mother's touch was stamped on his body and ask him what more he wanted. He was deeply moved, he closed his eyes and folded his hands.

CHAMPAKLAL

(*Champaklal's Treasures*, p. 8)

"Lord, give me this Grace to never forget you."

(A prayer given by the Mother to a Sadhak)

All the articles in this issue, except *Champaklal's Reminiscences*, are extracts from the writings and talks of SRI AUROBINDO and THE MOTHER. Most of the Mother's words are translations from the original French. Titles to these extracts are given by the editor.